

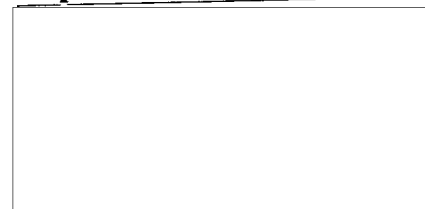


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Articles

Libya's Air Force: A Tool Waiting To Be Used

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The negligible role of the Libyan Air Force against US forces in March and April probably reflected a strategic decision that the service could not be relied upon, but, even though Qadhafi's view of the Air Force is unlikely to change soon, he probably will feel compelled to make better use of it in the event of further US military action.

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Syria-Jordan: Damascus's Military Agenda

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A key aspect of Syrian policy toward Jordan is President Assad's effort to obtain long-term Jordanian military cooperation in establishing a "strategic balance" with Israel. Amman has apparently resisted Syrian entreaties, but Assad can be expected to keep pushing.

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Fortress Kabul: Soviet and Afghan Regime Forces Consolidate Control

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Soviet and Afghan regime forces have slowly increased their control of the Kabul area over the past few years, establishing security zones around the city and conducting periodic sweeps in the area. To maintain their current level of activity in Kabul, the insurgents will have to further refine their tactics and operations.

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India: Coping With a Foodgrain Surplus



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New Delhi is intensifying its efforts to find consumers for its surplus wheat and rice, but the grain's poor quality and the country's inadequate export facilities make it difficult for India to be competitive in the world foodgrain market.



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Articles

Libya's Air Force:
A Tool Waiting To Be Used

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The Libyan Air Force played a negligible role in the US-Libyan fighting in March and April of this year. It had ample opportunity to interact with US fighters and ships in March—6th Fleet battle groups lingered within reach of Libyan planes for several days before and after the first shots were fired—but the Air Force remained passive.

- The quality of their interceptors and missiles (including MIG-23 Flogger Gs carrying AA-7s, MIG-25 Foxbat Es carrying AA-6s and AA-8s, and Mirage F-1s carrying Matra 530s).
- The 10 percent of Libyan pilots who we believe would be considered combat qualified by NATO standards.

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Most encounters between US and Libyan pilots—
—have revealed unimpressive Libyan performance, but a few encounters in February highlighted the potential threat posed by the more professional pilots.

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We believe that the shift in Libya's use of its Air Force from February to March resulted from a reassessment in Tripoli of the likelihood of hostilities combined with a strategic decision that the service could not be relied upon as a first line of defense against US forces.

The Air Force's night intercept capabilities remain negligible. night training was rare before 1986 and has been erratic since. In the wake of three night strikes by US aircraft, the Libyans almost certainly will soon begin an earnest effort to address this critical deficiency. We believe, however, that several months of intensive night training are required before the Air Force can pose a nighttime threat to US forces.

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Air Force Capabilities

If ordered to engage US fighters, Libyan Air Force losses almost certainly would be high, but a maximum effort could also inflict a few US losses by relying on:

- The high number of ready aircraft and pilots (130 to 150 fighter sorties probably can be launched per day for several days).

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Military Strategy and Political Goals

Since February, Tripoli's tactics for engaging US forces have militated against employment of the Air Force. [REDACTED]

forces conduct similar operations the previous month and sail away without attacking Libya or penetrating Libyan-claimed waters. He almost certainly concluded that Washington's aim was to intimidate him or provoke his forces to fire the first shot. We believe that he had decided that Washington was playing a game and felt free to have his Air Force put on a bold show, with little risk of combat, fulfilling the second of the above aims. [REDACTED]

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Tripoli probably was attracted to surface-to-air missiles because:

- It could exercise more firm control over the firing of surface-to-air missiles than the firing of air-to-air missiles by Libyan pilots.
- It had an inflated view of the usefulness of SA-5s against high-performance aircraft.
- Use of surface-to-air missiles could more clearly be cast as self-defense in Libyan propaganda. [REDACTED]

In March, the unprecedented presence of three US aircraft carriers off Libya probably gave Qadhafi new misgivings about Washington's intent. Consequently, the Air Force response to the US presence was more tentative than it had been in February. The Libyan pilots displayed none of the aggressiveness of the previous month and approached US aircraft infrequently. [REDACTED]

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On 24 March US ships and aircraft made their first daylight penetration of the Libyan-claimed Gulf of Sidra since 1981, prompting the firing of Libyan SA-5s. [REDACTED]

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The strategy probably was less intended for military effectiveness than to support Qadhafi's political goals in a confrontation with the United States. We believe Qadhafi's aims were to:

- Make a show of upholding his policy to defend Libya's claim to the Gulf of Sidra.
- Be seen as unintimidated by US military strength.
- Inflict enough US losses for a propaganda victory, and then try to avoid further combat that could lead to Libyan humiliation. [REDACTED]

The energetic Air Force response to the US operations off Libya in February appears to have resulted from a decision by Qadhafi that the potential for conflict was low. Qadhafi had watched the US

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Tripoli's air defense policy in April almost certainly continued to call for surface-to-air missiles to serve as Libya's first line of defense. Libyan fighters were on the ground when US aircraft arrived over Tripoli and Benghazi, leaving all combat strictly to Libyan missiles and anti-aircraft artillery according to the commander of the US forces in Europe. [redacted]

Motive for Tripoli's Air Defense Tactics

In our view, doubts about the military capabilities and political loyalty of the Air Force helped to limit its use by Tripoli against US forces in March and April. Several factors may have contributed to this low regard:

- The last time Libyan aircraft tried to take on US fighters in 1981, a Libyan SU-22 pilot fired his missile incompetently (the tail-aspect missile was fired head on) and was in turn shot down with his wingman.
- The last time Soviet-made and US-made aircraft entered combat—over Lebanon in 1982—89 Syrian aircraft were shot down, while Israel lost none.

- [redacted] the Air Force is the service least loyal to Qadhafi, and many Libyan pilots have been arrested [redacted]

Outlook: Shift in Tactics Likely

Qadhafi's view of the reliability of his Air Force probably will not change soon, but he is likely to feel compelled to make better use of it than he did in March and April in the event of further US military action. The US air raids highlighted the fallacy of relying on surface-to-air missiles as Libya's first line of defense—bombs were dropped on Qadhafi's Aziziyah residence, in Libya's heaviest missile concentration, and all but one of the US planes escaped unscathed. We believe that it is only a matter of time before Tripoli's defense planners conclude that, even with its current capabilities, the Air Force could play a productive role in countering a future air raid. [redacted]

It is likely that Tripoli will make the Air Force Libya's first line of defense in periods of high tension with the United States. Qadhafi probably believes he could weather a humiliating defeat of his Air Force better than the perception that US aircraft can strike Libyan cities with impunity. [redacted]

Indicators that Tripoli has implemented this tactic would be:

- Libyan interceptors aggressively investigating US flights off Libya, such as occurred in February.
- Establishment of corridors for Libyan fighters to pass through firing zones of land-based air defense weapons.
- Libyan fighters beginning regular night intercept training. [redacted]

Tripoli also may use the Air Force against US Navy ships. The Libyan Navy's usefulness in this capacity was called into question in March, when the 6th Fleet preemptively attacked approaching Libyan combatants. Tripoli may now believe that its best chance of hitting a US ship would be with Libyan fighters. [redacted]

[redacted] Libya also has AS-9 air-to-surface missiles that could be used against ships. Thus

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far, however, the Air Force's proficiency in this type of warfare almost certainly is low, and no Libyan aircraft has been detected approaching US ships with antiship ordnance. [REDACTED]

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The timing for any of these tactical changes is difficult to predict. Qadhafi has appointed a senior military commission to assess the performance of Libya's air defense assets in the 15 April raids,

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Syria-Jordan: Damascus's Military Agenda

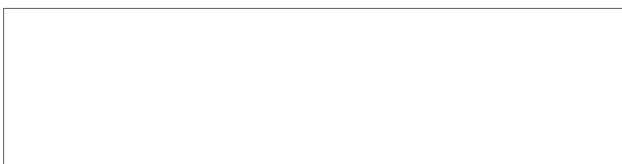
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Although the Arab press is full of optimism regarding a Syrian-Jordanian rapprochement following the recent meetings between President Assad and King Hussein in Damascus and Amman, little attention has been paid to a key aspect of Syrian policy toward Jordan. President Assad is seeking long-term Jordanian military cooperation for his pursuit of "strategic balance" with Israel. []

Syria believes Israel could use Jordanian territory to outflank Damascus's defenses in any future war and would like to prevent this. At this point, Amman has apparently successfully deflected Syrian entreaties, but Assad can be expected to keep pushing. []

The Meetings

Following King Hussein's visit to Damascus in December 1985, marking the largest step toward Syrian-Jordanian rapprochement in nine years, President Assad visited Amman on 5 May for several days of discussions with the Jordanian leadership. Although much publicity surrounded Assad's historic visit, little detail was provided in either Syria or Jordan on the content of the discussions. Talks between Assad and Hussein probably centered on bilateral economic and political issues, military cooperation between the two states, the peace process, the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and the Iran-Iraq war. []



[] In light of Hussein's quick trip to Damascus on 24 May, followed by a brief visit to Baghdad, it appears that the Syrian-Iraqi relationship was high on Hussein's agenda for these meetings. []

Syrian Pursuit of Military Cooperation

According to pro-Syrian Kuwaiti press reports, "informed" Jordanian sources stated that military issues were high on Assad's agenda in Amman. Assad proposed that Syria provide air defense protection for northern Jordan from Syrian air defense units stationed in southern Syria and noted that Syria would be willing to send mobile air defense units to areas in northern Jordan to complement the Jordanian air defense system. []

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Given increasing tensions between Syria and Israel, it is logical that Assad would choose this time to court the Jordanians, especially where the military is involved. Syria's southernmost air defenses would be particularly vulnerable to Israeli airstrikes if the attacking aircraft approached through Jordanian airspace. The rugged terrain west of Amman could mask approaching Israeli aircraft until they were only a few minutes from targets in southern Syria. Air defenses in southern Syria primarily are directed toward the Golan Heights, and the Syrians almost certainly are less alert to a threat from the south. []

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A good indication of long-term Syrian concerns about its southern flank is the construction this spring of another SA-5 surface-to-air missile site at Izra near the Syrian-Jordanian border. The Syrians probably are also concerned that Israeli ground forces could try to outflank Syria's Golan fortifications via northern Jordan in any future conflict. []

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Jordan's Response

Hussein has left his options open and apparently has not consented to any military agreements.

Assad is likely to continue pressing Hussein on the issue of Syrian-Jordanian military cooperation. Damascus remains concerned about an Israeli attack and wants assurances of military cooperation from Jordan. Damascus may pursue what it considers otherwise useless negotiations in the hope of convincing the Jordanians that military cooperation with Syria is in their best interest.

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Jordan and

Syria agreed to improve their cooperation

It is likely that Syrian-Jordanian relations will continue on an even keel for some time, with more meetings and more initiatives from both Damascus and Amman, but it is unlikely that either side will change its policies fundamentally in the near future.

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there are substantial and fundamental differences between Syria and Jordan, and, because of those differences, rapprochement between the two countries will be limited and slow.

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Since almost all of the benefits in such an agreement would accrue to Syria and in light of the newness of the Syrian-Jordanian rapprochement—relations have been strained since 1977, with Syria having moved its Army to the Jordanian border in late 1980—it seems that Hussein will continue to deflect Assad's demands. The absence of a Syrian-Jordanian joint statement after the Assad-Hussein meetings indicates that no firm commitments or agreements were reached.

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Looking Ahead

The round of meetings between Assad and Hussein in May did not result in major policy changes in either Damascus or Amman. Hussein is seeking to lead a moderate Arab movement or gain the support of moderate Arabs in the Middle East,

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while Assad is probably hoping to put forth the appearance of moderating his foreign policies to appease his Saudi and Kuwaiti backers, without significantly altering anything. In this regard, Hussein's mediation efforts are a useful tool for Damascus, giving Assad a vehicle to demonstrate—verbally—moderation in Syrian policies, without being formally committed to a more moderate course of action.

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**Fortress Kabul: Soviet and Afghan
Regime Forces Consolidate Control**

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Soviet and Afghan regime forces have slowly increased their control of the Kabul area over the past few years. They have established security zones around the city and nearby military areas, hampering insurgent efforts at infiltration. Some 28,000 Soviet and 20,000 Afghan regime military and paramilitary troops are stationed in the capital, providing Kabul with the highest concentration of military forces in the country. Periodic combat sweeps have virtually depopulated areas south of Kabul where insurgents previously had a major presence and hindered guerrilla operations elsewhere near the city. Insurgent forces are still active in the capital, but operations have become more difficult because of the Soviet and Afghan regime defensive measures.

The insurgency in Kabul is comparatively restrained compared to previous levels of activity. In 1983 improved cooperation among guerrillas operating in Kabul led to coordinated attacks on the Bala Hissar Fortress, the Microrayon housing complex, and even Radio Kabul in the central city. Assassinations and attacks on facilities occupied by regime and Soviet officials were more common. Moreover, the number and intensity of rocket and mortar attacks on the city were greater and the frequency of the attacks more regular.

Ring Around Kabul

Although the preponderance of Soviet and Afghan regime military forces in Kabul has been a major factor inhibiting guerrilla attacks in the city, defensive measures around Kabul have been decisive in helping to keep the insurgents at bay.

a series of small outposts now guard the southern approaches to the capital. One of these, in the Monarai Ghar mountains overlooking the

Masa'i Valley, can be reached only by helicopter and is equipped with heavy mortars to harass guerrilla forces in the area.

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In conjunction with the lookout points, the Soviets have created a virtual no man's land south of the city. all houses within 500 meters of a key section of the Kabul-Gardeyz road have been destroyed and that most of the villages have been bombed or shelled. As a consequence, the southern Masa'i and the Sorkh Ab Valleys are almost completely depopulated.

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patrol activity by Afghan and Soviet forces has created de facto defensive rings around the city. The inner ring consists of Soviet troops patrolling in tanks and other armored vehicles, the middle zone is guarded by Afghan regime forces, and the outer area is covered by Soviet helicopter forces.

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Besides measures to protect ground installations in the Kabul area, the Soviets have increased precautions to protect air operations from insurgent missiles. Beginning in late 1984, aircraft using Kabul International Airport started flying evasive maneuvers on takeoff and landing. The maneuvers included sharp banking turns and steep ascents and descents over the city to avoid low-altitude flights over the hills around Kabul, from which insurgents have fired at aircraft. Military aircraft using the airport have employed flares to deflect heat-seeking missiles. Additionally, the Soviets use MI-24 Hind attack helicopters to escort transport aircraft in and out of the zone of greatest vulnerability near the airport.

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***A Selected Chronology of Military Incidents in
Kabul, August 1984-February 1986***

31 August 1984	A bomb exploded at Kabul Airport killing 28 and wounding 350.	18-27 May 1985	For the first time in several months, the insurgents carried out a series of small attacks on Kabul Airport.
13 September 1984	The insurgents carried out heavy rocket attacks on the city, concentrating on military posts and Soviet housing areas.	1-2 July 1985	The insurgents fired on the airport and the eastern suburbs, including the Microrayon area.
24 September 1984	The insurgents assaulted Bala Hissar fortress and other military targets, overrunning several posts. This was the most prolonged, concentrated, and intense fighting in the city since August 1983.	8-10 July 1985	Bombs exploded at the Kabul Polytechnical Institute and in the Microrayon area, killing a total of six Soviets.
3 November 1984	A rocket attack caused a major fire in a Kabul bazaar. There was some speculation that insurgent units were responsible.	27 July 1985	The resistance conducted an attack on the airport—the heaviest in a year.
25 November 1984	Insurgents fired rockets on the eastern section of Kabul. Residents called it the most intense rocket attack since the Soviet invasion in 1979.	7 August 1985	Resistance forces assaulted Soviets and regime military posts on the western outskirts of the city.
18-25 March 1985	Several bombings occurred in the Microrayon area, a housing complex for officials.	19 October 1985	The resistance staged an attack on Kabul Airport that lasted several hours.
13 April 1985	Insurgents fired rockets at the Bala Hissar Fortress and the Microrayon area in the first attack of this sort since autumn.	3-10 February 1986	The insurgents carried out rocket attacks on the airport and military posts in the eastern part of the city.

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**India: Coping With a
Foodgrain Surplus**

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New Delhi is intensifying its efforts to find consumers for its surplus wheat and rice. The grain's poor quality and the country's inadequate export facilities, however, make it difficult for India to be competitive in the world foodgrain market. Although we do not believe New Delhi will be able to improve the quality of its grain or construct additional storage and transportation facilities to support increased grain export operations in the short term, it might manage more spot sales. Over the next several years, if India can overcome some of its export obstacles, it might be able, in particular, to capture a portion of the Soviet and Middle Eastern market. New Delhi also intends to use some of its surplus by expanding the distribution of grain in its domestic food-for-work programs.

Background

The expanded use of modern farming techniques and favorable government purchase prices have boosted India's wheat production by an annual average of 7 percent and rice output by 3 percent since 1975. New Delhi has promoted the use of modern farming inputs by subsidizing the prices of fertilizer and high-yield seeds and providing funds to help farmers establish irrigation facilities. In 1983 New Delhi offered farmers higher-than-market prices to boost production. Every season the government announces guaranteed prices for grains, with the Food Corporation of India, a government organization, buying about 10 percent of the country's production, subsidizing the price and distributing the grain through ration shops.

With record harvests swelling the availability of grain on the open market, there has been less demand at the ration shops in the last two years. As a result, government grain stocks are expected to total slightly over 30 million metric tons following the June 1986 harvest. India's storage facilities, however, hold only 20 million metric tons; the remainder is stored outside. Wheat is expected to account for about 21 million metric tons of the government stocks and rice, 9 million metric tons.

India has expressed an interest in using a portion of the surplus to increase the amount of foodgrain distributed in antipoverty programs. The government spent around \$800 million last year on rural food-for-work programs, giving employment to landless laborers in the lean postmonsoon season. Workers get about 1 kilogram of grain per day as part of their wages. New Delhi is considering increasing this to 3 kilograms per day. It also plans to expand the network of ration shops outside the towns; few states have a rural network of shops. Many Indians, according to press reports, want the excess grain used to feed the poor. Despite the burgeoning stocks, about 40 percent of India's population cannot meet their minimal nutritional needs.

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New Delhi would also like to establish itself as a source of wheat for export to reduce the surplus and earn additional foreign exchange. Before last year, India had never exported wheat commercially, although in 1977-80 it repaid a loan from the Soviet Union with about 1.5 million tons of wheat and periodically sent small amounts to Bangladesh and Nepal. To reduce the growing wheat surplus, New Delhi signed contracts in the latter half of 1985 to sell 500,000 metric tons to the USSR and 200,000 tons to Romania, and it has given 100,000 tons to drought-stricken countries in Africa, according to the press.

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Because of popular sensitivities, until this year New Delhi refused to subsidize grain exports to be competitive with world prices. The change in New Delhi's position was prompted by the realization that the government would be better off absorbing the losses on grain exports instead of leaving the unstored grain exposed to the approaching monsoons.

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Export Obstacles and Opportunities

The greatest obstacle to New Delhi's efforts to become a significant world source of foodgrain is the inferior quality of the grain. Poor handling during the harvest, inadequate use of pesticides and fertilizers in some areas, and insufficient storage facilities prevent India's grain from achieving Western levels of quality. The presence of karnal bunt¹ or "stinking smut" in the Soviet Union's first commercial imports of Indian wheat prompted Moscow to request that the 293,000-metric-ton balance of the contract be filled with Canadian or US wheat.

Although the Soviets have publicly commented that they will turn to their traditional friends for grain imports should the Chernobyl² nuclear power accident affect domestic availability, their dissatisfaction with India's grain may force them to buy elsewhere.

New Delhi is reluctant to commit itself to long-term contracts and prefers to limit its exports to spot market sales or short-term deals. In the event of a protracted drought, the country would be hard pressed to maintain sufficient stocks both to feed its large population and to meet export commitments, according to press reports. Despite the extensive use of irrigation and modern farm inputs, India's agriculture still relies heavily on the monsoons.

New Delhi was importing wheat as late as 1984 and, as a result, has not established the necessary facilities or acquired the marketing ability to support large-scale exports. For example, India's railroads have a capacity to move up to 8 million metric tons a year from the major wheat-producing areas in the northwest. This capacity, however, is insufficient to transport the grain for domestic purposes to urban storage and processing centers, according to press reports, much less to move large quantities for export. Therefore, much of the grain deteriorates while it is in open storage. To overcome India's lack of experience in the export of grain, the government's chief marketing official has requested information from the United States on its grain production and all aspects of its international trade in grain.

¹ Karnal bunt is a fungus that affects wheat.

As India enters the world market, it will face stiff competition from established exporters. The current worldwide surplus in wheat and rice is projected to last for the next three to five years, according to the press. The downward pressure on prices caused by glut conditions will make it harder for New Delhi to enter the market.

At the same time, India may be able, once the quality of its grain is improved, to use the excess for barter. For example, India could barter with the Soviet Union for military goods; with Egypt for cotton; with Nigeria, Iran, and Iraq for oil; with Indonesia for primary metals; and with Japan and Korea for manufactured goods. In addition, wheat exports would constitute a method of fulfilling India's growing aid obligations to Third World areas such as Bangladesh and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Until New Delhi can build sufficient storage facilities and solve its grain quality problem, India will probably concentrate on occasional spot and short-term grain sales. If India can overcome the quality obstacle, it would probably have a competitive advantage for geographical reasons in the USSR, Iran, and Iraq, which account for 30 percent of world grain imports. Increased grain exports or barter would help reduce India's budget deficit and ease its foreign payments strains.

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